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Title : Need to declare birth anniversary of Srimanta Sankardev, the 16th century Vaishnava Saint of Assam as a National Holiday.

DR. ARUN KUMAR SARMA (LAKHIMPUR): I would like to draw the attention of the Government towards a very popular demand of the people of Assam about declaring the birth anniversary of Srimanta Sankardev, the 16th century Vaishnava Saint of Assam as a National Holiday. Born in 1449, a contemporary of Guru Nanak, Srimanta Sankardev founded the doctrine of Vaishnavism and pioneered the Neo-Vaishnavite movement in North-Eastern part of India. With his inherent universal love, he was successful in binding all sections of the society including religious and ethnic groups and could successfully infuse the spirit of a glorifying Indian nationalism. He was not only a Vaishnavite Guru of the medieval period but also the multi-faceted genius. Srimanta Sankardev, as a philosopher and social scientist, was instrumental in the creation of a distinct social structure taking village as a unit of local governance resembling the present day Panchayati Raj institutions. With his immense command in dance, drama, literature, art and culture, he was able to integrate all categories of interest in evolving a unique Cultural Heritage of India, now being recognized by World Heritage Committee of UNESCO. The contribution of such a great personality deserves appropriate recognition of the Nation not only to guide the young generation of our country but also to emotionally integrate a region.

I, therefore, urge upon the Government to consider declaration of his birth anniversary as a National Holiday. I also appeal to ensure that the contributions of Srimanta Sankardev find adequate place in the official publications of the Government and the CBSE curriculum as well.